

When I was in college working on my degree in mass communications, one of the required courses was one on broadcast law. Among other things, this course covered various FCC rulings and regulations.

At the time I took the course, the FCC was reconsidering its limits on the number of media outlets one corporation could own. We discussed the possibility (and the later action) with a great deal of alarm, but hoped that the FCC would monitor the results of its action.

The worst we discussed, however, has come to pass. By failing to force megamedia corporations to give equal airtime to both sides of a campaign, the FCC is failing to do what it is supposed to do -- safeguard the marketplace of ideas which allow voters to be truly informed.

The doctrine of scarcity is supposed to rule the public airwaves. Sinclair has use of these public airwaves, but is SUPPOSED to be presenting equal time for both sides. With its recent decision to force its stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election -- while doing NOTHING to present the obverse side of the coin -- Sinclair is abusing the public resources with which it has been entrusted.

Sinclair CANNOT be allowed to use this public resource for propaganda purposes. Airing a smear documentary just weeks before a major election is precisely that. This is not an action that needs to be winked at and later punished with a mere fine. This action needs to be stopped. Now.

FCC, please do what you were appointed to do. Keep the airwaves for those who truly own it -- the American public -- and not the media moguls in the pocket of George Bush. Thank you.